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Chairman: Mr. KARUKUBIRO-KAMUNANWIRE (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 34 (continued)

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA: HEARINGS

The CHAIRMAN: Members will recall that, in connection with this agenda item, which will be considered directly in plenary meeting, the General Assembly has decided that organizations and individuals having a special interest in the question of apartheid will be permitted to be heard by the Special Political Committee. At its 2nd meeting, held on 9 October 1990, the Committee decided to set a deadline of 15 November for the submission of requests for a hearing and to consider all requests received by that date at a meeting prior to the hearings. The requests for a hearing, contained in documents A/SPC/45/L.3 and Add.1 to 8, were subsequently approved by the Committee at its 16th meeting, held on 19 November.

I propose that, following the practice of previous years, the Committee request a verbatim record of these hearings.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I appeal to all speakers in the hearings in connection with agenda item 34 to confine their remarks to the policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa.

The first speaker is Ms. Beatrice von Roemer of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, on whom I now call.

Ms. von ROEMER: On behalf of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which represents over 99 million workers in 101 countries, I wish to thank the Special Political Committee for once again giving us the opportunity to present further information on the situation of the trade union movement in South Africa.

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(Ms. von Roemer)

Since we last appeared before this Committee, great changes have taken place in the world, and even in South Africa there is finally a glimmer of hope. However, one must guard against too much optimism and against a premature relaxation of vigilance. A great deal more remains to be done, and delaying tactics are very much in evidence.

Earlier this year, proposals to amend the Labour Relations Amendment Act had been agreed to by the two major trade union federations, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU), and the South African Employers' Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA), the employers' organization. However, the Government failed to put those proposals before Parliament. Talks then resumed in August in a tripartite committee. In early September, COSATU and NACTU announced that they would stage a mass action for three days in early October if agreement was not reached. Subsequently, the two trade union federations and the employers' federation met with the Minister of Manpower and an agreement was finally reached. It includes a Government undertaking that legislative amendments will be introduced in Parliament next February.

The Government has also committed itself to addressing as a matter of priority the position of farm workers, domestic workers and State employees, and to investigating how labour relations rights could be extended to them. So far they have not been covered by the Labour Relations Act or other relevant acts.

The situation of farm workers is especially serious. In the last six months a series of industrial disputes involving farm workers has taken place. One of the major disputes started in early August on the Zebediela citrus fruit estate in eastern Transvaal, where more than 1,500 members of the National Union of Farm Workers went on strike after a breakdown in negotiations for a wage increase.

(Ms. von Roemer)

Management responded by dismissing the workers. In recent negotiations they offered to reinstate only 800 to 1,000 workers, and so far the union has rejected the offer. NACTU, to which the union is affiliated, has called for a boycott of the citrus fruit estate, and several political and student organizations have responded.

Another case involved a company in the eastern Transvaal, where 3,000 workers were sacked following a wage dispute which resulted in strike action. The management applied for a Supreme Court order to evict the workers from the farm. For some workers it was the only home they knew; they had been born on that farm. However, an out-of-court settlement was reached, and it was reported that the workers had been re-employed.

The ICFTU and its affiliates will continue to monitor closely the trade union situation in South Africa. We shall remain vigilant until the agreed-upon amendments to the Labour Relations Amendment Act are passed by the South African Parliament and until trade union rights are extended to all workers, including public service workers, domestic employees and farm workers. Special attention will be given to the conditions of farm workers.

(Ms. von Roemer)

The ICFTU is naturally gravely concerned over the recent outbreak of violence, mainly in Natal. There is no doubt that right-wing elements are taking advantage of the situation. Even President De Klerk agreed that the pattern of violence suggested involvement by a "third force", with highly trained killers.

More than any other sector of the population, working people have been affected by this violence. It has had a major impact on economic activity, as workers have stayed at home to protect themselves and their homes. It has also severely curtailed trade union activities, and many trade union leaders have been subject to attack and have had to go into hiding.

President De Klerk has been vigorously campaigning to convince foreign governments that change in South Africa is now irreversible. However, so far, negotiations on the future of South Africa have not even started. Even when they do start and agreement is eventually reached between the parties, the agreement will be referred to the white minority for approval. In view of the current mood of opinion, anything could happen. Thus, it would clearly be premature for the international community to relax its support for the black majority in South Africa.

In the meantime, while the state of emergency has finally been lifted, this has had little practical effect because a host of other laws, such as the Internal Security Act, the Public Safety Act and the Defence and Police Acts, enable the Government to deal with unrest. The only difference is that the authorities have to follow slightly lengthier procedures and the officials involved do not enjoy full indemnity, as they did under the state of emergency.

The South African Government has announced that the Group Areas Act, which defines where people can live according to their racial group, and the Land Acts, which restrict ownership of land on a racial basis, are to be repealed next year.

(Ms. von Roemer)

This would leave one major pillar of the apartheid system: the Population Registration Act, which classifies people according to race. The Government claims that this Act is inseparable from the present Constitution, and will fall away when a new constitution is adopted. The ICFTU and its affiliates intend to campaign vigorously for the immediate removal of the Population Registration Act and all racially based laws, classifications and policies in South Africa.

With regard to the return of political refugees, the Government has not fulfilled its part of the agreement reached with the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), and has demanded that exiles must state which crimes they committed in South Africa, including leaving the country without a passport, which most of them did. In September it was reported that the ANC had given the Government a list of 3,000 people for repatriation, but by the end of October no word had been received on when they would be allowed to return.

The ICFTU supports the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session, and also recently adopted resolution 44/244, which determines that further steps need to be undertaken by the South African régime to implement the profound and irreversible changes called for in the Declaration. To ease international pressure at this time would only weaken the hand of the black majority and encourage the Pretoria Government to engage in delaying tactics. It is therefore essential that existing sanctions be maintained.

The ICFTU will continue to give maximum support to the democratic trade union movement in South Africa, to enable that movement to grow in strength and prepare itself to play a major role as a social partner in a new, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is Ms. Donna Katzin of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility.

Ms. KATZIN: As Director of South Africa Programmes for the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), I should like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to address you here today.

At this moment we stand poised at a most precarious moment in South Africa's history. There is at once more progress and greater hope for a negotiated end to apartheid than ever before; yet the country has been racked by the most brutal political violence in decades. There have been more reforms than the country had seen in recent years; yet the laws which are the pillars of apartheid remain firmly in place. South African liberation movements estimate that between 2,500 and 3,000 political prisoners were still in gaol as of last September, with captives, including children under the age of 18, being detained daily.

Most distressing is the two-fold policy pursued by Pretoria: while President De Klerk has advocated reforms and negotiations, a wide variety of international organizations have documented close collaboration between the South African police and vigilantes committing atrocities across the country.

Within the country, co-operation between attackers and Government forces has been documented by the Congress of South African Trade Unions, many other organizations and the the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The SACC's General Secretary, the Reverend Frank Chikane, said it plainly: "The police are involved in killing us".

The international community has a key role to play at this critical juncture: without strong and sustained international pressure, the progress which has been made to date in South Africa is likely to fall tragically short of its goal, and the dreams of a non-racial and non-sexist democracy are likely to be stillborn.

(Ms. Katzin)

The position of the United Nations itself is as relevant now as it was last December, when the General Assembly issued its Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. That Declaration, as you know, resolved, in its Programme of Action,

"To ensure that the international community does not relax existing measures aimed at encouraging the South African régime to eradicate apartheid until there is clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes, bearing in mind the objectives of this Declaration". (resolution S-16/1, para. 9(e))

Since that Declaration, the South African Council of Churches has provided a most useful standard for defining "irreversible changes", made all the more necessary by the South African and United States Governments' co-opting that term to inflate the significance of Pretoria's partial reforms and to pave the way for lifting or softening international sanctions.

On 6 October 1990 the SACC declared:

"The dismantling of apartheid will be irreversible only when: (i) a constituent assembly is constituted; (ii) sovereign power is removed from the existing apartheid legislative structures and invested either in a Constituent Assembly or another agreed interim structure; (iii) the white minority cannot legally reverse or veto the process of change through the present, unrepresentative legislative structures".

According to these criteria, and those of other anti-apartheid and international organizations, change in South Africa is far from irreversible. In this context, the General Assembly is called upon by its own Declaration to maintain international pressure against the apartheid system.

(Ms. Katzin)

There is little doubt that these international economic pressures have had a substantial impact on South Africa. Together they have caused a net capital outflow from South Africa of \$14 billion since 1985; they have reduced foreign exchange; they have caused marked technological stagnation; and, together, they have reduced South Africa's growth rate to an anticipated 1.5 per cent in 1990, far below the 5 to 6 per cent needed simply to keep pace with the country's expanding black work force.

Owing to restrictions on new capital available for Pretoria, and the three successive agreements to repay and reschedule South Africa's \$24-billion debt, the apartheid economy has sunk under the weight of its outstanding foreign loans. These obligations have multiplied the effect of existing sanctions on new investment and trade, which between 1985 and 1989 drained an estimated \$7 billion or more from the pool of capital available to Pretoria for debt repayment.

(Ms. Katzin)

In a recent study, the Investor Responsibility Research Centre reported that South Africa's policies have resulted in technological stagnation, "unimpressive productivity gains" and "virtually no efficiency gains". "At worst," it said, South Africa has "become less efficient." The IRRC calculates that, had the country ended apartheid, its economy would be 20 to 35 per cent higher than it is today as a result of its self-destructive economic policies.

During the past year South Africa has experienced a mild recession, above and beyond the inefficiencies endemic to apartheid. While there was an improvement in the national balance of payments at the beginning of the year, Anglo-American leaders warned that economic recovery would require lower inflation and increasing foreign exchange reserves. With the recent rise in the price of oil resulting from the Persian Gulf crisis and existing sanctions, this improvement seems unlikely.

Indeed, the conflicts in the Gulf have only magnified the impact of existing sanctions. As a result of the international oil embargo, South Africa must pay an "apartheid premium" to purchase oil on the more expensive spot market. While its lopsided economy depends on gold exports for approximately 40 per cent of its export earnings, which are necessary to generate a sufficient balance of payments to repay its debt, the instability of apartheid and international sanctions on lending and investment caused the situation to be even more difficult. Consequently, South Africa's economic fortunes depend heavily on the price of gold and oil.

By the end of last year the international oil embargo itself had cost South Africa more than \$25 billion since it was declared in 1979. Analysing the sluggish rise in the gold market and the high cost of oil, End Loans to South Africa reported that the Gulf crisis was raising the net cost to South Africa of existing sanctions to an additional \$2.5 million per day.

(Ms. Katzin)

These trends underscore the importance of keeping all international pressures, including the oil embargo and financial sanctions, firmly in place. Yet we are all only too painfully aware of loopholes in our national and international measures which allow companies and banks to slip through the prohibitions and maintain their economic support for the apartheid system. If our sanctions are to be made truly effective in the short time during which peaceful change is still possible in South Africa, the gaps in these sanctions need to be closed in the following ways.

The first is by way of comprehensive sanctions. While sanctions in a number of countries discourage or prohibit new investment in South Africa, few require companies to sever their non-equity ties. These licence, distribution, technology and sales agreements ensure an ongoing supply of goods, services and technology, which fuel the apartheid economy and reduce the impact of other sanctions.

Under these arrangements United States companies such as IBM, UNISYS and Control Data, Japanese companies such as Hitashi, and Italian manufacturers such as Olivetti continue to provide the foreign computers and software on which the South African economy depends. So long as such transnationals' technology is allowed to flow into South Africa the impact of other sanctions will be diluted.

Local laws in cities like New York and Chicago have begun to close these loopholes by prohibiting business with companies with such ties to South Africa. As a result of this legislation, XEROX announced last August that it would join the ranks of Honeywell, Motorola and NYNEX and make a commitment not to renew non-equity agreements with South Africa when they expire unless apartheid is abolished by then.

In the coming months it will also be important for Member States to respect, not to subvert, each other's efforts to maintain sanctions. As Germany and

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Japan have been South Africa's two largest trading partners, they will need to take special care not to undermine or take unfair commercial advantage of sanctions in countries like the United States.

In view of the objectives of existing sanctions, it is also necessary for Member States to enforce their sanctions in a way that paves the way for the South African majority's full participation in negotiations on their own future. The Congress of South African Trade Unions supports a fair disinvestment principle which upholds the rights of workers during the disinvestment process.

This campaign is key at a time when a number of multinational corporations, such as the American Cyanamid Company, and Ciba-Geigy in the South African chemical industry, have taken the offensive in undercutting South African unions' rights, benefits and power. Fair disinvestment procedures uphold the intent of existing sanctions by helping South Africa's black majority retain the strength and recognition necessary to play a major role in future negotiations to shape the political economy of a democratic country.

Secondly, there are financial sanctions. While the United States has banned new investment in and loans to apartheid South Africa, these sanctions have been eroded by actions of a number of United States banks. Citibank, Chase Manhattan and Manufacturers Hanover Trust have converted between 45 per cent and 100 per cent of their outstanding short-term South African loans to 10-year loans. More than half the loans held by British banks, such as Barclays, Standard Chartered and National Westminster, have been similarly converted. These banks have provided the functional equivalent of new loans and substantially diminished the financial leverage of other sanctions. They also retain correspondent banking ties which facilitate South Africa's foreign trade, thereby undermining the impact of commercial sanctions.

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A number of European banks have offered even more direct affronts to measures aimed at Pretoria's financial isolation. Swiss banks have helped South Africa circumvent international restrictions by offering gold loans and gold swaps. There is evidence that during the past year they have also increased short-term trade credits and rolled over outstanding loans to South Africa. The German Commerzbank has acted as paying agent for an ESCOM bond, while the Swiss Bank Corporation facilitated the issuance of South African debt which refinanced an earlier issue of the South African Transport Services.

Finally, and perhaps most important to this body, such international financial institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) should be required to take increasing care not to sabotage the financial pressure of Member States by extending new loans to South Africa. With the IMF's recent meeting to review the status of the South African economy and the World Bank's attempts to establish itself in South Africa as a base for regional operations, there is cause for grave concern that these agencies will find ways to issue new loans prematurely to the apartheid Government and to legitimate similar actions by other banks and nations.

Thirdly, there are targeted sanctions, such as the oil embargo. Despite the marked impact of the international oil embargo, which has cost South Africa \$25 billion above its crude oil bill, additional international measures are needed to enforce existing statutes. Oil traders such as Marc Rich and the Africa Middle East Petroleum Company and shipping companies such as Hong Kong's World-Wide Shipping and Greece's Livanos-Carras Group continue to puncture the international oil embargo by supplying petroleum to apartheid South Africa. These companies have taken the place of the Norwegian shippers that stopped transporting crude oil to

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South Africa when Norway banned such shipments back in 1987. For the embargo to be fully effective now when it is most needed such trade and shipments must also be banned.

Fourthly, and finally, there is the issue of toxic waste - a final, genocidal contribution to the apartheid economy of South Africa. During the past year international scientists have exposed transnational corporations involved in shipping hazardous waste to South Africa and processing it in such a way that it ends up poisoning the drinking and irrigation water of surrounding black communities. American Cyanamid regularly exports millions of tons of toxic waste to be treated by the British-owned Thor chemical plant in South Africa. Sediment sampled outside the Thor plant revealed hazardous contamination at more than 8,000 times the United States standard for hazardous waste. Contamination of the headwaters of the nearby Mgeveni River - the major water source for the KwaZulu homeland and much of Natal - was 7,500 times that hazardous waste level.

Only last month the Press Officer for South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs clarified the position, saying that, while his Department has set South Africa off-limits for waste imports, Thor chemicals imported mercury waste was not regarded as a waste but rather as a "raw material". If the international community is to help ensure that South Africa's oppressed majority survives to see the day of its own freedom, it should take immediate measures to prevent any further poisoning of African communities.

In conclusion, when Nelson Mandela addressed the European Parliament on 13 June this year, he stated the following clearly:

"Sanctions were imposed as a peaceful means of ensuring the end of apartheid. As we have said, this result has not yet been achieved. It is therefore only logical that the existing sanctions should be kept in place. We would like to

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issue this serious warning, that any movement backwards on this issue will threaten the process of negotiation itself."

At this critical time, those committed to the rapid and decisive end of apartheid can do no less than maintain, implement and monitor the policies and decisions taken until they achieve their desired objective. Only thus can we support the just and authentic struggle of the South African people for their own liberation. Only then can we ensure that apartheid will be eradicated and a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa will take its rightful place in the community of nations.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of the Association of Concerned Taxpayers, Mr. Bryce Hallowell.

Mr. HALLOWELL: The Special Political Committee has embarked on a long and potentially fruitful mission to gain a broader understanding of the circumstances which led to the South African tragedy known as apartheid. Its findings should help formulate the new policy of the United Nations in light of circumstances which will have led to a new South Africa, one in which democracy reigns supreme.

The country is drastically different than even the one presented to this Committee in hearings only last year and, accordingly, the role of the United Nations should be different as well. The past can never be forgotten and its lessons must be learned, but the future of South Africa, for the first time in many years, is bright and the dreams of its people offer hope for a new beginning. I wish the Committee much success in its journey to find solutions to the remaining problems of a post-apartheid South Africa.

I am grateful for the opportunity to address this distinguished Committee and have listened with interest to comments made during the course of the discussion. The South African dilemma is one with no quick fix or clearly identifiable resolution, yet it is a question which remains a top priority of not only the United Nations but also many Governments around the world.

The twists and turns of South African history have left many with a feeling of complete despair. The deep-rooted complexities unique to South Africa make resolution of its problems much more difficult than they appear on the surface. Violence and depression have been a way of life for far too many South Africans for far too long. Tribalism, racism, ethnic tensions and economic drought have created a tinder-dry cultural climate, ready to ignite with but the slightest flash. Yet, for the first time in many years, hope is being genuinely offered to all

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South Africans that theirs is a future of democracy and the promise of a better tomorrow.

The last year has proven to be truly historic and will serve as the new beginning all South Africans have so long desired. The changes being made on virtually a daily basis have propelled South Africa into new and uncharted areas. Political parties, such as the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), Inkatha Movement and others, have been legitimized and offer an alternative to the nation's citizens. The often publicized cornerstones of apartheid - the Pass laws, the Separate Amenities Act, the Land Act, the Group Areas Act - have or will soon be completely removed. They crumbled with the same speed and intensity as have the communist governments of Eastern Europe. But while the world has heralded the developments in Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, the Soviet Union and elsewhere, the changes in South Africa have been met with criticism, scepticism and ostracism. This Committee will report to the General Assembly about the situation in South Africa and should find that, indeed, dramatic change has taken place. It must also remember that these reforms have been implemented with the hope of receiving encouragement from the world community so that the South African leaders can take to the people concrete evidence that such changes will help improve the situation there. Not all South Africans agree with the opening of the society, and those forces will be quick to change if improvements are not readily identifiable. The far right is hoping that reforms in South Africa will fall flat on their face so as to create confusion and allow them to hold on to the old South Africa that much longer. This Committee, and legislative bodies the world over, have the power to prevent such opposition from maintaining the status quo in South Africa.

By helping and not hindering the process of reform, even more expedient change can be realized. Becoming pro-active rather than reactive to developments in

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South Africa gives the United Nations an opportunity to shape the new South Africa, not merely stand by idly and pass judgement on its success or failure. Effecting positive change is one of the original goals of the United Nations. Surely the situation in South Africa now mandates that the United Nations work towards its goal and help those trying to change the system from within. We have seen many, many times how difficult change under the banner of "reform, not revolution" is; but in South Africa it has a real chance to succeed. With the help of this Committee, the United Nations will start off on the right foot. Embracing positive change and rewarding it should be the key to the new United Nations policy towards South Africa.

To be sure, South Africa still has to clear several hurdles. But acceptance by the world community will help the nation to reach heights deemed unobtainable only one year ago. If this world has learned nothing else in the past year, let it remember that no goal is unreachable, no mountain too high, no struggle too long or too hard, to achieve ultimate victory. Dramatic and sweeping change has affected every corner of the globe, and South Africa is no exception.

But while the laws of apartheid have been almost completely wiped from the books in South Africa, the attitudes of many do not yet reflect the change that the Government, business leaders and others have strived so hard for. Most of us know all too well that the seeds of racism prove very difficult to remove. They may linger for years and in most instances will never be completely wiped out. It is therefore even more astonishing that, given the hostile environment in South Africa, a new, fully democratic and non-racial order is emerging.

With the new South Africa forming on the horizon, it is now time to change course and to reflect the changing attitudes of South Africa as well. No longer

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will isolationist tactics which disrupt the economic life of South Africa be of use to the United Nations or any nation. The changes in South Africa, which President Bush and leaders of many other Western nations have heralded as "irreversible", will be effective only if the United Nations and other organizations recognize their significance and move to support them now.

Reformers in South Africa have risked basically everything to bring the nation back from the edge of international isolation. Through pro-active involvement in South Africa, Governments and businesses around the world can have a positive effect on the rapid development of a South African economic and social structure built on an entirely new foundation, one which addresses the serious problems of the past with new thinking and allows all individuals the chance to be contributing members of the community. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) should be preparing, as we speak, proposals to help fledgling economic development take flight, but they will do so only after receiving a go-ahead from this body. A show of support for the broad initiatives of the De Klerk Government and others working for positive change is what is needed and what should be the result of these hearings.

That does not mean, however, that everything in South Africa is right. We need only read the papers to learn of the horrible atrocities being inflicted on the black population by other blacks. Eight hundred to a thousand blacks have died since August in pseudo-political rivalries between Zulu and Xhosa factions, and the number grows every day. Some of those inflicting violence have been spurred to action by ultra-right-wing conservatives who believe that instability is their greatest ally. The majority of South Africans, however, want help from the international community. The call goes out daily, but we must listen and act accordingly.

(Mr. Hallowell)

All too often, failure to respond to sweeping changes towards democracy has led to their demise, and we cannot take that chance in South Africa, which is a nation to which the entire Sub-Saharan region looks for its economic lifeline. Fueled by the most productive economy in the region, South Africa has provided thousands of jobs to the many divergent cultures of the region. Supporting a South African economic engine which does not work on the basis of a racial theory will prove to be valuable for all of southern Africa. Continued neglect, however, may prove to cause hardships, both economic and political, that will leave generations of southern Africans without hopes or dreams.

To seize the moment and bring even greater change to South Africa is what this Committee is charged with doing. Your ideas and ultimate action will shape the face of the entire sub-Saharan region; they should not be entered into with haste or any preconceived notions. Look at the positive changes which have occurred and realize that their continued success is dependent upon support and encouragement from bodies such as this. Guide South Africa towards a new future. Please do not push it towards the edge.

The CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is the representative of the National Center for Public Policy Research, Mr. David A. Ridenour.

Mr. RIDENOUR: I want to thank you very much for this opportunity to speak on an issue of vital importance: the changing face of South Africa.

When F. W. de Klerk was elected South African State President in September 1989 no one predicted the astounding changes that would occur under his leadership. In just over one year De Klerk has dismantled elements of apartheid that took hundreds of years to build. As many of you know, racial segregation in South Africa is not simply a twentieth-century phenomenon; it dates back to the seventeenth century. The United Nations itself recently recognized De Klerk's

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achievements, saying in a July report that South Africa had "reached the threshold of a new era" of non-racial democracy.

A review of the most significant reforms undertaken by F. W. de Klerk may be in order.

On 16 November 1989 President De Klerk announced that the Separate Amenities Act, one of the cornerstones of petty apartheid, would be abolished and that all public beaches would be open to all races. As many of you know, the Separate Amenities Act established strict segregation of public facilities.

On 28 November 1989 the South African Government announced that South Africa's security establishment would be placed under civilian control for the first time ever.

In February of this year President De Klerk not only released Nelson Mandela from prison but legalized all previously banned or restricted anti-apartheid organizations, including the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress; he repealed restrictions on the media pertaining to political unrest; and he lifted a ban on political activities in the schools.

Last June De Klerk lifted South Africa's five-year-old state of emergency in all but Natal Province - in the case of that Province, pending resolution of the internecine political violence between the African National Congress and Inkatha. Within two months the state of emergency was lifted in Natal as well.

De Klerk's Government opened good-faith negotiations with the African National Congress shortly after the release of Mandela and other security prisoners, which was aimed at negotiating a new, non-racial nation. These talks resulted in the ratification of two agreements between the Government and the ANC, the Groote Schuur Minute and the Pretoria Minute. The former, among other things, committed both

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sides to a peaceful process of negotiation and provided procedures for resolving the dispute between the Government and the ANC over political prisoners. In so doing, the Groote Schuur Minute, approved in May 1990, set the stage for approval of the Pretoria Minute on 6 August 1990. The Pretoria Minute and related agreements formally put to rest South Africa's political-prisoner question by establishing a definition of "political prisoner" agreed to by both the ANC and the South African Government and by setting both the timetable and procedures by which such prisoners would be released. The Pretoria Minute specifies that "[under] certain circumstances, a 'common' crime, even a serious one such as murder, may be regarded as a political offence" if a political motive can be found. By agreeing to such a broad definition of "political prisoner", the De Klerk Government most certainly demonstrated its commitment to the negotiation process.

Clearly, the changes that have occurred in South Africa in recent months have been unprecedented. Some analysts have even likened the changes sweeping South Africa to Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost. But there is more to this comparison than merely reforms. F. W. de Klerk, no less than Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, faces challenges to his leadership, and without De Klerk the programme of dismantling the apartheid system could be in jeopardy.

President De Klerk faces three principal threats to his leadership.

The first is parliamentary opposition. Opposition to De Klerk's reformist policies by right-wing elements within the white electorate, coupled with the National Party's apparent inability to stem the tide of punitive economic sanctions, have cost the National Party dearly at the polls in recent years. In September 1989, for instance, the National Party received its smallest majority in the South African Parliament in its 41-year history, losing significant ground to the pro-apartheid Conservative Party. In those elections the Conservative Party

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increased its representation in Parliament by almost 80 per cent, garnering 45 per cent of the Afrikaner vote - just 1 per cent less than the National Party. A majority of South African voters are Afrikaners. In an apparent effort to capitalize on the National Party's declining fortunes, the Conservative Party has regularly called upon De Klerk to hold a referendum among the white electorate on his reform initiatives and has consistently called for new parliamentary elections. More recently, last March a confidential National Party survey showed that the pro-apartheid, white supremacist Conservative Party would win over 50 per cent of the vote if elections were held - a 31 per cent jump from the previous election. The National's Party's support has no doubt continued its downward tumble since then. South Africa experienced a 2.1 per cent drop in real gross domestic product in the third quarter of this year, in part due to international sanctions and disinvestment - the fourth consecutive quarterly decline.

The second principal threat to De Klerk's leadership is internal party challenges. Hardliners within the National Party, such as Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok, have already made their objections to some of De Klerk's reforms well known. Earlier this year there were even indications that former National Party State President P. W. Botha would try to make a political comeback in opposition to De Klerk. In the past such conflicts have resulted in irreconcilable schisms and to the formation of alternative political parties. In 1969, for example, four dissident National Party Members of Parliament founded the Herstigte Nasionale Party over a disagreement with the sports policy of the then Prime Minister, B. J. Vorster. In 1982, 16 National Party parliamentarians broke away from the National Party to form the Conservative Party when then Prime Minister P. W. Botha suggested that multi-racial government was possible.

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The third threat comes from right and left-wing militancy. In the past year there has been a sharp rise in political terrorism in South Africa, from both the right and the left, as a result of the rapid dismantling of apartheid. During the first 10 months of 1990 alone there were 314 such incidents, compared with 193 for the whole of 1989. These figures do not include the estimated thousands of acts of violence between members of the African National Congress and Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha movement. The political space opened through De Klerk's reforms has allowed the ANC to operate freely throughout the country, but the ANC does not always operate through peaceful means. On 9 August, three days after the ANC had agreed to suspend its armed struggle, the ANC leader for Natal Province, Harry Gwala, affirmed, "The time for clapping people on the cheek is past. Now we will fight with the AK-47." In the two weeks that followed, the ANC committed at least 13 acts of terrorism. One of the more illuminating of such attacks occurred on 11 August in the town of Ermelo in the Eastern Transvaal, where the ANC was sponsoring a consumer boycott. On that day the home of a black town councillor was attacked by an ANC militant with hand grenades. The perpetrator was Vusi Kubheka, who had infiltrated South Africa from Botswana on 8 August. Kubheka claimed that his orders were to proceed with the armed struggle despite its so-called suspension. Just as alarming is the determination of extreme-right organizations to prevent multi-racial democracy through force of arms. There were reports earlier this year that right-wing extremists planned to assassinate both President F. W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, and during the township violence between the ANC and Inkatha rightists they were said to be engaged in selective assassination and sniper activity aimed at further inciting the violence.

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So, you see, De Klerk's position is not entirely secure. But we can make him more secure by giving him something to show for his reform efforts, something he can show his constituency. Like the world response to the Soviet Union's glasnost, the United Nations Member countries should seek to bolster the reformist elements within South African society. Policies should be adopted, including the offer of incentives, that promote the reform process, not stifle it. This can be done by reducing punitive sanctions now.

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But would reducing or ameliorating international sanctions be consistent with the conditions set by the United Nations? I believe the answer is yes.

Last December the United Nations set the five following conditions as necessary for the removal of punitive international sanctions against South Africa.

The first condition was the legalization of banned political groups and of the right of all political groups to organize, stage protests, and so on. This condition was met in full in February of this year with the unbanning of over 60 anti-apartheid groups, including the ANC, the South African Communist Party, the Azanian People's Organization and the Pan Africanist Congress.

The second was the release of all political prisoners. This condition was satisfactorily met with the signing of the Pretoria Minute. This agreement provided mutually acceptable terms for the settlement of the political prisoner question between the Government and the ANC.

The third was the ending of rule by emergency decree. This condition has also been largely met. The five-year-old state of emergency regulations have been lifted throughout South Africa. Remaining security legislation is under review, as specified in the Pretoria Minute.

The fourth was the termination of all political trials and executions. This condition also seems largely to have been met. Now that the political prisoner question has been resolved in a mutually acceptable manner, the issue of political trials is largely moot. In terms of executions, F.W. de Klerk has already declared a temporary moratorium on executions until the laws regarding capital offences can be ameliorated through the negotiation process.

The fifth was the withdrawal of all South African troops from the townships. This is the only condition on which the South African Government falls considerably short, but it is also, in present circumstances, an unreasonable and unrealistic condition. Late last summer and early this fall, internecine political violence

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between the ANC and Inkatha resulted in the deaths of close to one thousand South African blacks in the townships. The ANC's Nelson Mandela even acknowledged the need for such a military presence. On 21 June, on ABC television's "A Town Meeting with Nelson Mandela", Mandela said,

"No Government anywhere in the world can tolerate violence in which close to 4,000 people have been killed, without interfering."

Until the threat of black-on-black violence subsides in the townships, removing troops from the townships is beyond the South African Government's control.

A final area I want to touch on briefly is the effect international economic sanctions against South Africa have had on the very people they were intended to help - black South Africans. It is now common knowledge that blacks in South Africa have borne the brunt of the negative consequences of punitive economic sanctions. On one estimate, by the year 2000 close to 2 million black jobs could be lost as a result of international sanctions. This impact is reflected in virtually every poll of black opinion conducted in South Africa since 1984.

I will give some examples. In 1984, a survey of black workers conducted by Lawrence Schlemmer for the United States State Department indicated that 75 per cent of the 551 blacks surveyed opposed sanctions. In August and September 1987, Mark Orkin of the Community Agency for Social Enquiry conducted a survey of 800 South African blacks in which 60 per cent of the respondents said that they would be opposed to sanctions if any black jobs were lost as a result. In March 1989, the highly respected Gallup polling organization conducted a poll of blacks in which 75 per cent of the respondents opposed punitive economic sanctions - including 65 per cent of the ANC supporters surveyed. The evidence is simply overwhelming: black South Africans oppose sanctions because blacks are hurt the most by them.

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In closing I just want to add that by lifting sanctions now, in my opinion, the international community can help to guide South Africa to a multiracial, democratic future by promoting stability. We should remember that the goal of sanctions in the first place was not just to bring down apartheid but to replace apartheid with a democratic society. South Africa should not simply replace one tyranny with another. Also, while I believe that the reform process under way in South Africa is indeed irreversible, there is nothing to prevent the international community from reimposing sanctions should the South African Government reverse course and begin rebuilding the old apartheid system. The structures that have fought so hard to bring down apartheid on the international level, and have been so successful, will continue to exist, and sanctions can easily be reimposed.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the Progressive Librarians Guild, Mr. Joseph D. Reilly.

Mr. REILLY: I am honoured to have another opportunity to address the Special Political Committee.

Last year I demonstrated to the Committee that the commitment of national and international library organizations to the liberation movement in South Africa was not only negligible but often counterproductive. This year I might have reported the same had it not been for the fact that rank-and-file librarians in South Africa, the United States, Scandinavia and elsewhere grew impatient with the leadership of their organizations and forged ahead to realign librarianship with the policies, strategies and goals of the liberation movement.

In the United States, the Progressive Librarians Guild was formed not long after my testimony here last November. The Guild now has over 200 members in 26 States and has been at the head of the struggle to maintain the cultural and academic boycott as defined in the May 1989 guidelines of the African National Congress (ANC). To this effect, the Guild joined other components of the American

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Library Association (ALA) to block the powerful United States publishing industry - represented by the Association of American Publishers - from receiving carte blanche approval from the ALA executive of re-entry to the apartheid market.

The Guild alerted the ANC and relevant bodies of the Mass Democratic Movement to the fact that this lobby was attempting to break the boycott. At the ALA's mid-winter conference in January 1990 the ANC's chief representative to the United Nations, Mr. Tebogo Mafole, issued a statement spelling out the liberation movement's policies on interactions with South Africa. This statement helped to block a resolution calling for an end to the boycott.

At the ALA's annual conference in June 1990 the publishing lobby made another attempt at breaking the boycott: it solicited a statement from the Congress of South African Writers in a most deceptive manner and then quoted this statement out of context to suit its own purposes. We alerted the Congress to this falsification, and it sent a second statement which spelled out in no uncertain terms that it was committed to the established policies of the liberation movement, and that no statement it wrote could be construed as advocating a breakdown of the boycott. As a result of this, the powerful testimony of the great South African poet, Dennis Brutus, and testimonies of librarians from virtually every constituency of the ALA, the executive was forced to draw up an official resolution stating that it would not heed the publishers' call for an end to the boycott.

On the international level, members of the ANC, the Progressive Librarians Guild, the BIS group of Scandinavian librarians, the Library and Information Workers' Organization - of South Africa - and others set up a picket at the annual conference of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) in August 1990. Placing no qualifications on which delegates could represent South African librarianship, IFLA was in fact bestowing its blessing on apartheid librarians who have staunchly defended apartheid censorship, apartheid education

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and apartheid amenities. It is librarians such as these who allow their facilities to refuse services to those citizens whose pigmentation they cannot bear to have in their midst. When the De Klerk Government lifted the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 a few weeks ago, it did so irresponsibly. There are so many loopholes now that any municipality wishing to bar groups of citizens from using their facilities may do so with ease.

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As a result, we see the Witbank Public Library fixing a \$7.80 "deposit fee" on books taken out by so-called non-residents. Since Witbank's residents are all white, as determined by the Group Areas Act, the Public Library is maintained as an apartheid institution. The Bethel Public Library took stronger steps than that: it fixed a \$200 annual fee, again for so-called non-residents. The best effort to prevent public access to a public library was made by the enlightened administrators of the Newcastle Public Library, which simply declared itself closed to all so-called new members. During celebrations of the Freedom Charter in June, patrons in the town of Ashtown were evicted from the whites-only public library when they attempted to apply for membership. The patrons then set up a picket line. The South African police arrived, gave the patrons five minutes to disperse and then fired birdshot, which resulted in serious injuries. The patrons were there to celebrate that part of the Freedom Charter that states: "The doors of learning and culture shall be opened". Apparently, the municipal board of Ashtown feels otherwise.

The point here is that the Government-approved library organization - the South African Institute of Library and Information Science (SAILIS) - has yet to be heard from with regard to any of those incidents. Last year I told the Committee about Joyce Mabudafhasi, a librarian who is also a leading activist in the United Democratic Front. After her house was bombed in the mid-1980s, Joyce was detained from 1986 until January 1989. Did SAILIS protest on her behalf? Did SAILIS demand that the librarian be released immediately? Did SAILIS organize other librarians to speak up on her behalf? No. It appears that just a few weeks ago, another assassination attempt was made against this courageous woman. Why won't SAILIS speak up for its colleague? It is clear that Joyce is not its colleague. She is a librarian who participates in the liberation of apartheid South Africa, and SAILIS

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is an organization that participates in maintaining the status quo of apartheid South Africa.

A group of South African librarians that grew tired of SAILIS formed a new structure, the Library and Information Workers Organization (LIWO), in July 1990. LIWO is dedicated to the Freedom Charter, and though it is still regionally based, it hopes to become a national library structure within a year or two. This organization is asking important questions about South African librarianship. Can existing librarians unlearn the old practices and the old professional ideology? Why is accessing information designed the way it is in South Africa? If possible, how can one repair the damage caused to library collections by apartheid? Can the interests of a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic and redistributive South Africa be served by existing library structures?

At the launch of this new structure, the Department of Arts and Culture of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) said:

"Your tasks, comrades, is a gigantic one: no less than the establishment of a new information order for the new South Africa".

A similar sentiment was expressed at a summer demonstration against the South African Broadcast Company. Workers carried banners reading: "Free the airwaves", "The people shall broadcast", and "Democratize - don't privatize". Is this not a key issue in the building of a new South Africa? Does it not immediately bring to mind the battle in this building, led by such brilliant people as the late Sean MacBride, for a new world information and communications order?

The reason the United States publishing lobby approached librarians to get approval to re-enter apartheid South Africa is that we purchase \$4.5 billion worth of materials from the publishing industry each year. The battle cry of the lobby that the book boycott blocked the "free flow of information". But we all know that they meant the free flow of Western information or, even more specifically, the

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free flow of North-Western information. And though some Member States here had a rather violent reaction to the new world information and communications order, and others dismissed the concept of cultural hegemony as mere abstraction, it cannot be denied that the information and communications conglomerates have been used for other services.

Before his death in 1988, Sean MacBride wrote:

"Control of the media, written and electronic, is of vital importance to those who wish to destabilize a Government or create tensions in different parts of the world."

Librarianship plays a role in that arena. The current issue of Library Journal has a letter from a disgruntled librarian who complains that the profession should not applaud those who make available to the public any materials that could undermine "national security". We have too many sad memories of what has been done in the name of national security: Iran and Guatemala in the 1950s; the Congo, Viet Nam, Brazil, Indonesia and the Dominican Republic in the 1960s; Chile and Angola in the 1970s; Nicaragua throughout the 1980s; and so many others far too numerous to mention here today.

Librarians in the United States have a responsibility to provide access to and dissemination of any materials that pertain to such disgusting activities. If United States Secretary of State James Baker says that the United States will provide electoral and political advice to South Africa by way of the National Endowment for Democracy, it is a librarian's duty to provide information pertaining to the history and activities of that structure. If a librarian has information on activities that may be taking place in the Caprivi Strip right now, it is his or her job to make such information available.

In closing, I would ask that Member States, especially those from the Non-Aligned Movement, encourage the development of a new information order in the

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new South Africa. Those in their countries who have actively participated in democratizing their information and communications sectors should establish and maintain relations with the relevant bodies of the liberation movement. Their national library structures should establish relations with the new library structure in South Africa that I described earlier.

The people of South Africa are working day and night to achieve their liberation. But the adversaries of liberation are also working around the clock. It is crucial that we act in our professional capacities to support fully the liberation movement of the African National Congress in stopping the seeds of destabilization from taking root. Data, documentation, information and knowledge - these are the tools with which we can expose such criminal activities.

I might also mention that the Special Political Committee performs a great service in providing non-diplomatic personnel with this forum. The victories we have scored in the field of librarianship are in large part due to the opportunity the Committee gave us last year. We hope very much to return next year to report more accomplishments.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.